

Appln No. 09/575,118
Amdt. Dated May 10, 2005
Response to Office Action of March 23, 2005

17

REMARKS

The Office Action has been carefully considered. The issues raised are traversed and addressed below with reference to the relevant headings and paragraph numbers appearing under the Detailed Action of the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

In view of the Examiner's objections the pending claim 34 has been revised to clarify the nature of the spatial relationship between the coded data and the list of directory entries, as well as to specify that the list of directory entries and the coded data are printed by a printer.

In particular claim 34 now specifies that each directory entry extends over a spatial zone and that coded data is provided in each spatial zone. A basis for these amendments can be found for example on page 10, lines 8 to 13 and in Figure 1 which describes how each element of the netpage includes a spatial extent (zone) and which shows the presence of coded data in this spatial zone. The use of zones, and in particular how zones have a spatial extent, is further described for example on page 21, line 6 onwards and on page 32, line 15 onwards.

As far as a basis for the printing being performed by a single printer is concerned, this can be found for example on page 10, line 19 to 28 which describes how netpages are printed via a printer. Page 23, line 27 onwards goes on to describe the rasterisation process, with section 7.2.1 on page 70 onwards describing how rasterisation occurs with the content of each data tag being generated during rasterisation. This therefore highlights that the printer prints both the tags and the list of directory entries or other visible information.

As far as the prior art objections are concerned, we respectfully submit that the claims were novel and inventive in their previous form. In particular, we note that in the Examiner's "Response to Arguments" section the Examiner indicates that LaMarca shows content directory substantially coincident with coded data. We respectfully submit that this is not the case.

As indicated by the Examiner, coincident indicates that they are "occupying the same space or time". A temporal limitation is already provided by reference to the printer printing the coded data and the list of directory entries substantially simultaneously. Accordingly, it is

App'n No. 09/575,118
Amdt. Dated May 10, 2005
Response to Office Action of March 23, 2005

18

clear that the term coincident is intended to refer to a spatial limitation. Furthermore, it is clear from the claim that the coded data must be coincident with the directory entries.

The Examiner has then drawn our attention to LaMarca Figures 1 and 3, which clearly show that the content items 12, 14, 16 and associated tokens 18, 22, 20 and 24 are provided at different spatial positions on the page. Accordingly, within the definition of the claim these are not substantially coincident and are instead clearly physically separated.

The Examiner has gone on to refer to Dymetman, which we note is not cited in the Examiner's current section 103 objections. Despite this, we would point out to the Examiner that whilst this does describe coded data and visible data which are provided coincidently, there is no mechanism within Dymetman which allows these to be printed substantially simultaneously.

The Examiner has specifically referred to column 12, lines 8 to 25. However this merely indicates that variations are within the scope of Dymetman. This does not make any reference to any specific variations and this is certainly not enough to teach or suggest to the skilled reader that printing may be performed in a single process. In particular, Dymetman is very explicit during its disclosure that the coded data and visible information must be printed separately by different individuals. The skilled reader upon reading this would understand this to form a vital part of the implementation of the process in Dymetman and therefore would not be led to consider printing both the coded data and the visible information substantially simultaneously.

We appreciate that the Examiner may consider that even if this were the case, when combined with the teaching of LaMarca which uses single step printing, then this would lead to the teaching of the invention. Again we respectfully submit that this is not the case.

In particular, whilst the LaMarca system can print coded data and content substantially simultaneously, it can only achieve this because the content and the coded data are both visible and are not coincident on the page. In contrast, Dymetman relates to a system which provides coded data and content coincidently on the page, but which can only achieve this by using a process in which the printing steps are performed separately, by different printers, and with a corresponding temporal separation.

Appln No. 09/575,118
Amdt. Dated May 10, 2005
Response to Office Action of March 23, 2005

19

The cited prior art therefore teaches two completely separate and non-interchangeable printing processes. Even when combined the teaching of these documents does not therefore lead to teaching an arrangement in which coded data and content are printed both spatially coincidently and at substantially the same time.

In particular, if one were to take the teaching of LaMarca this would indicate that visible coded data may be provided together with spatially separated visible content on a page at the same time. One would then be led to consider the teachings of Dymetman, which would highlight that if coincident invisible coded data is provided with visible content then this must be performed in separate printing steps.

Considering the teaching of the combination, the skilled person would therefore conclude that it is possible to print invisible coded data on a page and then subsequently, and in a separate step, print both visible information and spatially separated coded data. This does not lead to the requirements of claim 1 which required that both coded data and content be provided both spatially coincidently and substantially at the same time.

Despite this, in order to advance prosecution of the application, we have revised the claim as set out above to specify that a printer prints the list of directory entries and the coded data, with the list of directory entries extending over a spatial zone in which coded data is provided. This therefore restricts the claim to circumstances in which coded data is printed on the page at the same place as (spatially coincidently with) each directory entry, by the same printer, at substantially the same time.

This is clearly outside of the scope of LaMarca, in which the tokens are very clearly placed in different places on the page when compared to the corresponding content, and Dymetman, in which printing must be performed at different times and by different printers. Furthermore, in light of the arguments presented above we do not believe that this combination is obvious or anticipated by any combination of the cited prior art.

Appln No. 09/575,118
Amdt. Dated May 10, 2005
Response to Office Action of March 23, 2005

20

CONCLUSION

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the objections and claim rejections have been successfully traversed and addressed. The amendments do not involve adding any information that was not already disclosed in the specification, and therefore no new matter is added. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the claims, and the application as a whole with these claims, are allowable, and a favourable reconsideration is therefore earnestly solicited.

Very respectfully,

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